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## NOTES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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**Constructive Peace Proposals.** The literature of international politics is becoming more and more marked by serious contributions to the political and economic foundations of a permanent international peace. Many of these contributions are from the pens of practical statesmen as well as university scholars, and by contrast with distinctly pacifist appeals they aim at a practical and scientific study of the underlying problems of world peace. A rough classification of the various proposals would place them in two distinct groups: those dealing with the political basis of international peace, which involves the question of nationalities, the rearrangement of European boundaries, federation versus the complete independence of related groups, international coöperation to secure the welfare of backward states, and a league of nations to give to all the peace and security which is beyond the reach of the individual state; secondly, those dealing with the economic basis of international peace, which involves the question of the freedom of the seas, the abolition of commercial restrictions upon navigable rivers, the unobstructed use of special ports and harbors and of railways leading from inland states to the sea, the problem of preferential tariffs between colonies and the mother country, freedom of opportunity in the development of backward countries, and other questions associated with them. In many cases it is not possible to separate the two groups of political and economic problems of readjustment; for on the one hand the economic issue is frequently found to be the underlying motive of political action, and on the other hand there are cases in which the political issue in its ideal form attempts to run counter to sound economic policy and must be held in restraint by it.

*The Problem of Nationalities.* Assuming the possibility at the close of the war of a settlement of the complex problem of nationalities along constructive lines, what is to be the standard by which the claims of social groups for recognition as separate state units are to be judged? What constitutes a nation? And when this has been determined the

further question arises whether it is possible or expedient to give to every group presenting a fair claim to be a nation the actual status as such among the sovereign states. Perhaps one of the best brief discussions of recent date of the elements which taken in their sum total constitute nationality is to be found in the volume by C. D. Burns entitled *The Morality of Nations* (University of London Press, 1915), where are enumerated and weighed the several forces of blood relationship, common language, and common tradition, which implies a common purpose and a common ideal, and which acts with most force when embodied in a distinctive form of religion. In *The Great Settlement* by C. Ernest Fayle (New York, Duffield and Company, 1915) the author tells us that by a nation he means "broadly speaking, a population united by common interests, common sympathies, common traditions, and a common history, and by a consciousness of unity which leads it to desire a common government." Race and language are not specifically mentioned here, but Mr. Fayle thinks that in general the above conditions involve "community of race or at least of speech;" though he finds that in some cases, such as Belgium and Switzerland, men who differ in blood and speech are seen to be united by other ties which create a genuine national sentiment. On the other hand it is possible to have two distinct nations, such as Serbia and Montenegro, which are both of the same race.

In his volume entitled *Some Frontiers of Tomorrow* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1915), L. W. Lyde similarly makes the claim of nationality depend not so much upon race or language as upon common ideals based upon historic associations and economic interests, resulting in a consciousness of unity. So also C. R. Buxton in his chapter on "Nationality" in the volume *Towards a Lasting Settlement*, while not attempting to define the idea of nationality, refers to the bond of identity of language or religion, as well as the belief of the groups seeking national unity that they "spring from the same stock and have shared from time immemorial in the same sufferings and achievements." Philip M. Brown, in a recent volume entitled *International Realities*, enumerates among the factors constituting the community of interests which determines a state, language, religion, political sympathies, common customs and traditions, and the economic factor of variety of products as well as the geographic factor of boundary lines naturally creating distinct groups.

It is clear that there is no absolute standard by which to judge the claim of a group of people to existence as a separate nation. The

historical development of races has proceeded as a series of cross-currents rather than as a smooth-flowing stream, and the natural operation of the factors constituting a nation have but too often been thwarted by the ruthlessness of conquest or the deliberate action of international congresses. Unhappily the barriers thus artificially set up have in time struck root in the soil and become a permanent source of difficulty. The colonizing of the northeast corner of Ireland by Scotch immigrants in the time of Cromwell is but one instance of an otherwise simple problem of nationality rendered almost hopelessly complex. So too in the Balkans differences of religion and race, artificially injected into districts possessing distinct nationality, have left a heritage of conflicting interests and sympathies which make it difficult to distinguish the basis for unity along national lines. In Austria-Hungary, where the struggle of separate groups for the recognition of their nationality has reached its most acute and complex form, there are numerous "islands" and "peninsulas" of foreign races breaking in upon the otherwise homogeneous character of the national group, and forming what have been designated as "little Ulsters" in opposition to the desires of the great majority of the province as a whole. Such, for example, is the colony of Magyars isolated in Eastern Transylvania in the midst of a solid Roumanian population on all sides. Such also is the Polish population, which running north from Bromberg to the Baltic Sea divides East Prussia from the remainder of the Empire. In like manner there are large German colonies in Bohemia and Moravia, which make it impossible to leave to the Czechs and Slovaks the complete control of those two provinces.

*Rearrangement of Boundary Lines.* The ideal settlement of the problem of nationalities is that boundary lines of government should coincide with the just claims of distinct national identity. But in attempting to apply this principle to the actual conditions of Europe a number of modifications must be introduced in order to obtain a practical program. Mr. Fayle points out that "while common nationality may be the essential foundation of a stable and prosperous state, geographical and economic factors cannot be left out of account. To ignore the relation of a coast to its hinterland or to sever districts united by every tie of economic interest may condemn a whole people to impoverishment and decay, in seeking to satisfy the national claims of an insignificant minority;" and in a subsequent chapter he lays stress upon the fact that "it would be a disastrous error to allow an exclusive preoccupation with questions of race and language to result in such a

redrawing of boundaries as would sever the connection between any great seaport and the districts for which it is the natural outlet." How the economic interests of the groups claiming recognition as separate state units can best be reconciled with their political claims is considered below in connection with the problem of federation.

In addition to the protection of economic interests it is thought by some writers that military interests must be adequately protected, and Professor Brown offers the statement that "mountains, as a rule, make better boundaries than rivers. The economic and other interests of the people inhabiting a river-valley—the Rhine, for example, are usually so identical as to render a river boundary artificial and obnoxious, a constant source of friction." The idea of boundaries as barriers of separation is given a prominent place in the volume entitled *Political Frontiers and Boundary Making* by Colonel Sir Thomas H. Holdich, in which the author says that "the first and greatest object of a national frontier is to insure peace and good will between contiguous peoples by putting a definite edge to the national political horizon, so as to limit unauthorized expansion and trespass," and his belief is that it is necessary to separate nations "by a barrier as effective as nature and art can make it." In striking contrast is the view of Mr. Lyde who holds that while political frontiers should be national they should at the same time be as far as possible assimilative, that is, the power of a state to assimilate conquered territory in the past should be a consideration in determining whether it should continue to hold such territory, and that frontiers should be as far as possible anti-defensive, that is, they should be identified with geographic features, such as navigable rivers, which tend to promote peaceful intercourse. Mr. Leon Dominian, in *The Frontiers of Language and Nationality in Europe*, is inclined to have national boundary lines determined by the language spoken by the majority, on the theory that all races are more or less mixed, while a common language implies as a rule a common culture which can be made the basis of a stable political organization.

*Federation with Local Autonomy.* Owing to the difficulty of determining with a fair degree of accuracy the just boundaries of national groups, taking into consideration economic needs as well as political aspirations, it has been proposed that the true solution of the problem of nationalities is not the complete independence of the distinct communities, in the cases where they are not seeking to be united to another state, but rather autonomy in matters of local government together with constitutional rights as members of a federal empire. It

is thought that autonomy in local matters would suffice to meet the fair claims of national groups to the free pursuit of their own ideals of culture in matters of religion, literature, art, festivities, and other forms of self-expression. On the other hand the subordination of these groups as members of a federal empire, provided their position within the empire were protected by a constitution and were based upon the principle of equal rights for all members of the federation, would tend to remove the barriers of suspicion and discord which inevitably rise between rival neighboring communities and to facilitate the friendly intercourse of the states within the federation, and at the same time it would make impossible the creation of competitive tariffs and would put the railways of the several states at the disposal of all. Had the position of Alsace-Lorraine within the German Empire been that of the other members of the federation rather than that of an imperial province, it is probable that much of the disaffection of parts of that territory would have been removed. Had the Czechs possessed local self-government within a federation of the component national groups of Austria-Hungary, the greater part of their claims to national independence would have had no meaning.

In order to satisfy the national claims of the Slavic communities of Austria-Hungary, exclusive of the Czechs of Bohemia, it is proposed, in an article by Sir Thomas Holdich in the *Fortnightly Review*, August, 1917, to form a Jugo-Slav federation, which shall include Serbia, Croatia and Slavonia, Carniola, Dalmatia, Bosnia, and Montenegro. It is manifestly impossible to give to all these separate groups complete independence, even should they desire it, so that their separate existence as autonomous members whether of a reconstructed Austro-Hungarian Empire or of a new Jugo-Slav federation is the best fate that can befall them. The plan has recently received the support of M. Pasitch, minister of foreign affairs of Serbia, and it is ably advocated by H. N. Brailsford in an article in the *Contemporary Review*, August, 1917, in which he thus presents the case of federation as against independence: "Federalism is more than a formula which may spare us a further two years of war. It is, ideally, the better solution. It must break down German hegemony in Central Europe, but without endangering the legitimate enterprise of the German people. It would be the natural preparation for a larger Society of Nations." The same writer in his *League of Nations*, recently published, urges that "the advantage of a federal solution is that it would throw upon the central government and parliament in the first place the duty of watching over the interests of minorities."

As has been pointed out in the discussion of the problem of nationalities, the boundary lines of nationality can scarcely anywhere be drawn so as not to include within the national group a minority of another race, so that the only possible solution in most cases is to be guided by the wishes of the large majority and then proceed to protect the rights of the minority by constitutional guarantees. The value of these constitutional guarantees will naturally be far more convincing to the minorities if the guarantees are not only part of the constitution of the autonomous state, but are embodied in the constitution of the federation as well. If this were done, "Vienna would see," as Mr. Brailsford says, "that the Czechs did not oppress the Germans in Bohemia, and Budapest would be vigilant for the Magyars in Transylvania." As an example of such constitutional guarantees there are the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments to the Constitution of the United States, which protect the negro in his rights of life, liberty, property and suffrage against encroachment by the local state governments, though there are, of course, special conditions present in the relation of the negro to the white races which make the problem of his protection distinct from that of the subject nationalities of Europe.

Apart from the protection of minorities there is the economic interest of the national group to be considered, and there can be no doubt that this interest would be better cared for under the status of autonomy rather than that of independence. As Mr. Fayle points out "the lot of a small inland State is not always a happy one," and Bohemia would gain enough from having a free access to the markets of Europe and of the world by inclusion in the *Zollverein* of a federation to justify the denial of the pride of complete independence. This aspect of the case is forcibly presented by Mr. Brailsford in his *League of Nations*, where he shows that "it is easy to denounce Austria-Hungary as a 'ramshackle Empire' and to call for its dismemberment, but the more one contemplates the strange fact of the union of these many races in one political unit, the more one is driven to the conclusion that there is a solid and natural reason for their combination. The reason is geographical and economic."

*International Coöperation.* The question of international coöperation to secure the welfare of backward states, being closely associated with the question of the "open door" and the internationalization of the fields of investment, is an economic as well as a political problem and will be considered in connection with the economic basis of peace. In like manner, although the League of Peace is in respect to its organi-

zation and powers a political problem, it is so intimately bound up with the economic basis of reconstruction that consideration of the plans for its establishment and of the difficulties which must be overcome before it can be brought into being will be reserved until the economic problems have been discussed.

**The Economic Program.** *The Freedom of the Seas.* Among the various proposals for the economic reorganization of the world in the interest of permanent peace the principle of the freedom of the seas has been given a prominent place. It had been frequently mentioned in unofficial German discussions of the terms of peace and was referred to in a speech of von Bethmann-Hollweg on November 9, 1916, in which, after pledging Germany's coöperation in peaceful arrangements to prevent war, the chancellor said: "Then the principles of justice and free development, not only on the Continent but also on the seas, must be made valid." But the principle was brought prominently before the public by President Wilson in his address on January 22, 1917, before the senate, in which he laid down the conditions under which he considered it possible that the United States might coöperate with other nations in establishing an international authority to guarantee peace, and stated that "the freedom of the seas is the sine qua non of peace, equality and coöperation;" and again on March 5 the President advocated as one of "the principles of a liberated mankind . . . that the seas should be equally free and safe for the use of all peoples, under rules set up by common agreement and consent, and that so far as practicable they should be accessible to all upon equal terms."

Considerable speculation has been indulged in as to the precise meaning of the "freedom of the seas;" for the seas have long been free in so far as concerns any direct obstacles to commercial intercourse in time of peace. In the fourth of a series of articles in the *New York Times* "Cosmos" interpreted von Bethmann-Hollweg's declaration as referring to a future war in which the control of the seas by Great Britain would be used, as in this war, "to deprive Germany and her allies of some advantages through trade with neutrals to which they are legally entitled," and that the difficulty would be met chiefly by the exemption of the private property of the enemy from capture at sea. In like manner Mr. Sidebotham, in a chapter on "The Freedom of the Seas" in the volume *Towards a Lasting Settlement*, conceives the freedom of the seas as a principle of war, not of peace, and defines it as meaning